

# New England State Issues August 2022

## News from the New England State Capitols

**Massachusetts** – On July 11, the Massachusetts Senate suspended its rules and approved SB 2994 (which was previously SB 1322, opposed by AKC). The bill originally sought to address injuries and deaths at dog daycare facilities, but would have negatively impacted individual dog owners, as it included restrictions on the right to own and keep dogs; and made broad, significant changes to state law that would result in duplicative license requirements. Senate Bill 2994 also removes protections in current law for owners of personal kennels. As such, most owners of personal kennels would be subject to municipal licensing and regulations, including inspections of home-based kennels. The bill also removes the recognition in current law of keeping dogs for personal, non-commercial use. AKC GR [issued an alert urging residents to contact the House of Representatives to express opposition](#). The response statewide with dog owners and breeders expressing concerns was significant. AKC GR is [pleased to report](#) SB 2994 did not advance further before the legislature adjourned its formal session August 1.

**Massachusetts** – [SB 2397](#) would prohibit the misrepresentation of a service animal. AKC GR submitted testimony in support to the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs for the public hearing. The bill was reported favorably by committee and referred to the committee on Senate Ways and Means. It is unlikely to advance now that the legislature has adjourned its formal session.

**Massachusetts** – The Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture heard testimony on three bills to protect research animals, allowing adoption after health examination upon retiring from research activities. AKC GR supported [HB 901](#) and [HB 966](#), but noted that definitions for animal shelter and rescue in the bill were inconsistent with current law. The committee advanced the bill favorably. HB 901 passed the House and small changes were made in the Senate before the bill advanced to the Governor's desk and was signed August 8 as [Chapter 149](#) of the Acts of 2022.

**Massachusetts** – [SB 551](#) would create an advisory board, with a shelter and rescue coordinator serving as chair, to oversee various functions of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. AKC GR expressed concerns to the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture, noting that a formal advisory board with permanent members chaired by a shelter and rescue coordinator is not necessary for the state agency to function effectively. The bill advanced favorably from committee and waited for placement on the Senate calendar but, is unlikely to pass now that the legislature has adjourned its formal session.

**Massachusetts** – [SB 2672](#) was released favorably by the Joint Judiciary Committee as a re-write of nine bills. AKC GR issued [an alert](#) summarizing before testifying at the May 19, 2021, public hearing. The bill would insert domestic animals and livestock into the civil fine structure for lack of adequate shelter or sanitation for dogs. Civil fines collected would be forwarded to the Homeless Fund that provides money for ACO training and the state spay/neuter program. It also provides the court with great latitude in deciding how long the offender will be prohibited from owning animals, including exceptions if an offender can prove they are capable of caring for animals or have sought required counseling. AKC GR is monitored this bill but, it is unlikely to advance now that the legislature has adjourned its formal session.

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